

## Our programme in Cape Verde

### Our Objective

To show how destination stakeholders can work together to assess and better manage the impacts of tourism.



## Current situation

Tourist arrivals to the 10-island archipelago of Cape Verde have grown rapidly in the last decade, and in 2014 an estimated 518,000 international tourists visited the country (WTTC, 2014), up from 336,000 visitors in 2010 (World Bank, 2014). These increases in tourism receipts contributed significantly to Cape Verde's transformation from a Least Developed Country to a Lower Middle Income country in 2007 (World Bank, 2015). Mainstream tourism investment has focussed on the islands of Sal and Boa Vista, where all-inclusive resorts have sprung up promising Western European source markets a 'fly and flop' beach holiday at a price that is cheaper than the Caribbean and a flight time of less than six hours.

In 2012, the Travel Foundation (TF) commissioned Sustainable Travel International and Intasave to carry out a Destination Sustainability Risk Assessment in Sal to identify the environmental, social and economic risks to Cape Verde's rapid tourism growth,

and recommend interventions to mitigate them. Based on the risks identified, TF set up a series of working groups with stakeholders in Sal in 2013 and a programme of work to tackle the following sustainability issues was agreed:

- Significant amounts of litter on Sal's beaches, degrading the visitor experience
- Beach users have the potential to damage protected environmental areas due to a lack of awareness
- Limited sense of belonging amongst the community in relation to their environmental resources, leading to a lack of environmental care, protection and conservation
- Visitors report there is 'nothing to do in Sal'
  - the island's unique features need to be promoted to encourage repeat visits and positive



recommendations

- Limited selection of excursions that are not unique to Sal, and unimaginative island tours
- Limited specialist training for guides that includes environmental or social sustainability
- Lack of interpretation signage at key attractions or sites of interest
- Current excursion portfolio offers limited local economic benefits
- Lack of knowledge, both from visitors and retailers about traditional Cape Verdean crafts
- Cape Verdean craft producers lack skills in product design and development, and micro enterprise skills, leading to limited income generating opportunities
- Poor coordination within the craft sector between producers, retailers and regulatory bodies
- Competition between Cape Verdean and West African craft retailers resulting in tourist hassle.

These issues highlighted the need to develop a more sustainable tourism product in Cape Verde, which increases the spread of tourism benefits to local

“TF projects have improved the integration of local artisans in the tourist market and consequently improved the dissemination of the Cape Verdean own craft

- Elísio Neves, CMSal

businesses and communities, offers a differentiated experience to tourists, protects the environment and ensures the longevity of Cape Verde as a tourism destination. TF’s work in Cape Verde is initially centred on the island of Sal with the aim that successful initiatives will be replicated in other islands by local stakeholders.

### Supporting national plans

A number of national strategies, visions and plans exist to transform Cape Verde into a sustainable tourism destination and TFs Cape Verde Programme aims to support these, including preserving the environment and keeping Cape Verde’s cultural practices alive, helping to market Cape Verde internationally as a diverse, unique tourism product. TF’s Cape Verde programme will lead to increased income from local products by building capacity within micro-excursion providers and craft producers and improving market linkages, increasing the multiplier effects of tourism.

Former Prime Minister José Maria Pereira Neves demonstrated his commitment to environmental management in Cape Verde’s Vision for the year 2025, saying:

“A country endowed with sustainable human development, with balanced regional development and commitment to environmental preservation and ecological awareness”

(UN Cape Verde, 2010:9).

Cape Verde’s Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper states that:

“Tourism shall be structured on the basis of a strategy of growth obtained by consensus with municipalities and the private sector, preserving the environmental, historic and cultural assets”



(IMF, 2010:65).

A report by UNDP (2013) highlights Cape Verde's development progress as a SID (Small Island State), and the role of tourism in this. It explains the four basic principles the Government of Cape Verde strive to adopt in their Strategic Plan for Cape Verde Tourism to develop sustainably:

"i) with high added value, with the involvement of local communities in the productive process and in its benefits; ii) that maximise the multiplier effects in terms of income generation, employment and social inclusion; iii) that will increase the level of competitiveness of Cape Verde, through the good quality of services provided; iv) promoting Cape Verde in international market as a diverse and quality place"

(UNDP, 2013:22).

ADB's Country Strategy Paper for Cape Verde acknowledges that structural reforms to the economy are required for tourism to increase GDP saying,

"Structural reforms - such as better organisation of local production of goods and services, the creation of a quality certification system for local products, and improvements in the inter-islands transportation systems - are necessary for the dynamism in tourism to translate into broader economic benefits"

(ADB,2014:2)

## Our approach

We are bringing public and private tourism stakeholders together to form a Destination Council, creating a culture of shared ownership and management with a range of projects which embed sustainable practices.

## Projects

The Travel Foundation carried out risk assessments research for Sal, Cape Verde in 2012, which identified the following sustainability issues as being key:

- Beach environments: litter, lack of education about the protection of beach environments
- A sense from visitors that there is 'nothing to do in Sal', combined with limited excursions and limited guide training available
- Lack of knowledge from both visitors and retailers about traditional Cape Verdean crafts, poor co-ordination within the craft sector between producers, retailers and regulatory bodies and competition between Cape Verdean and West African craft sellers, leading to tourist hassle

Following the creation of the Destination Council in 2013, the following three projects were born to begin tackling some of the sustainability issues on the island.

### Cape Verdean Crafts

#### 2014 - 2016

The Travel Foundation is improving opportunities for craft vendors to earn a living from tourism through training, product development and linkages to hotels.

#### Aim:

To increase the awareness, provision and competitive nature of the Cape Verdean craft offering in Sal.

#### Key activities

- Delivering training workshops to Cape Verdean craft producers and retailers to improve the quality and competitiveness of traditional craft



products.

- Facilitating improved market access for craft producers by hosting events between producers and retailers, and linking producers to hotel outlets.
- An in-depth assessment of the current supply and demand of Cape Verdean crafts in Sal and the key constraints faced by craft producers and vendors.
- We have also facilitated the setting up of a regular craft market in Salinas Sea Hotel, in Santa Maria, where 17 local craft vendors currently display their work, on a rotational basis.

### Results to date

- 15 craft producers and 11 vendors participated in a workshop
- 93% of participants felt that the information gained would help them in developing and growing their business (craft workshop, 2014).
- 100% of participants felt that the information gained would help them in developing and growing their business, and 100% would recommend the workshop to a friend or colleague (craft workshop 2015).
- 17 craft producers now sell their wares at Salinas Sea Resort Craft Market

### Better Beaches

#### 2014 - 2016

We're improving customer experience on five of Sal's beaches, this includes improving beach signage and quality. We want to help create a vibrant beach environment that attracts customers, is valued by

local communities and benefits wildlife and local businesses alike.

### Aim:

To improve the beach user experience and increase the number of tourists and residents visiting five of Sal's beaches.

### Key activities

- Conducting baseline surveys with 432 residents and visitors in order to better understand current beach use and satisfaction levels. In addition, assessments have been carried out at eight beaches to inform beach improvement action plans.
- Installed new tourist signage at the beaches
- 50 guides trained in best practice guidelines for turtle watching

### Results

- Health & Safety / Environmental awareness signs implemented on 5 beaches (TBC)
- 4 beach cleans were supported (i.e. promotion, material, refreshments)

### Discover the Real Sal

#### 2014 - 2016

'Discover the Real Sal' project is about ensuring that there are high quality excursions on offer so that tourists feel enthused to explore the island of Sal. If more tourists get out and about, the benefits of tourism will be spread throughout the communities on the island.

### Aim:





To improve the visitor experience and their perceptions of Sal through the improvement of the existing excursion offers and the development of new exciting tourism experiences.

### Key activities

- We created an Sal Insider Guide including an inspirational map of the Island (now visible at the airport) highlighting the best things to see and do in Sal which is distributed via hotels
- We provided training to micro-excursion providers, as well as encouraging market linkages with the mainstream tourism industry

### Results

- 21 micro excursion providers from 17 different enterprises attended 'Are you ready for business' training run by TF's Head of Industry Programmes.
- 9 out of the 10 excursion training participants surveyed had applied the knowledge acquired and reported positive feedback from customers on excursion improvements.
- We have installed interpretation signage at key attractions which include information on Sal's history and culture, with support from public sector partners.

## Upcoming projects

### Efficient Energy & Water Management

#### What we're doing

Following a study of energy and water use in Sal's tourism sector, we're implementing activities to



*TF projects have promoted social and cultural activities in all sectors and have awakened the entrepreneurial spirit of artisans on Sal.*

*- Damià Pujol Alibés, APP*

improve the efficiency of resource management in hotels, bars and restaurants.

#### Why

To alleviate the pressure that rapid tourism growth is putting on water and energy resources, reducing carbon emissions and improving supply to the island's residents.

52% of hotels that were studied use grey water on their gardens. Re-using water is a step in the right direction.

### Efficient waste management

#### What we're doing

Based on findings from a waste management in practice study, we're implementing activities to reduce, recycle and reuse waste from hotels on the islands of Sal and Boa Vista.

#### Why

To introduce practical methods of managing waste produced as a result of hotel operations, reducing waste that goes to landfill and that pollutes the local ecosystems.

7,599 tonnes of waste are produced every year by the hotels that were studied on Sal and Boa Vista



## Improved excursion impacts

### What we're doing

Researching the impacts of tourism excursions on the social, environmental and economic make-up of Sal, with the goal of recommending 'good practice' guidelines for providers.

### Why

To create recognised criteria and practical guidelines that excursion providers will use to plan their itineraries, improving the impact of their tours and creating better tourist experiences.

40 guides have already been trained in 'good practice' guidelines for turtle watching.

- Increased appreciation and care of Sal's beach environment
- Increased awareness amongst visitors and tourism stakeholders of traditional Cape Verdean crafts, culture and history
- Improved market linkages between craft producers and vendors, and microexcursion providers and tour operators/ground agents
- Improved range of differentiated excursions available in Sal leading to improved visitor experience and perceptions of Sal
- Increased income for craft producers and micro-excursion providers
- Local tourism industry stakeholders taking action towards the vision of Sal as a sustainable tourism destination

## Expected impact and outcomes

**A self-sustaining collaborative Destination Council that identifies and implements initiatives to maximise the positive impacts of tourism and minimise the negative**

### Anticipated outcomes

- Cleaner beach environments on at least five beaches
- Increased awareness amongst visitors of Sal's beaches leading to increased beach visits and increased spend outside the hotel

## Working in collaboration

The following list of organisations form the Destination Council:

General Direction of Tourism, Cape Verde; City Hall of Sal; CEFEP - Centre of employment and professional training; ADEI - Agency for business development and innovation; Chamber of Tourism of Cape Verde; Aguas de Ponta Preta (private water and energy supplier); Guiantur - Association of Tourist Guides; A Incubadora - Sal Women's Cooperative; TUI UK & Ireland; TUI Portugal; On Travel Solutions; Vista Verde; Hotel Morabeza; Oasis Atlantico Hotel Group; Hotel Odjo d'Água; RIU Hotels & Resorts; Melia Dunas and Tortuga Beach Resort; and Hotel Farol.



## Supporting resources

Website:

[www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/cape\\_verde](http://www.thetravelfoundation.org.uk/cape_verde)

## References

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**Last updated in February 2017 by Thomas Armitt, Destinations Programme Officer, Cape Verde.**